Extra berth in trains' coaches

†666.SHRI MOTI LAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have added one additional berth between the two berths adjoining window in three thousand second class sleeper compartments, causing a lot of inconvenience to the passengers;

(b) whether Railways had conducted any survey to know the public opinion in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that 97 per cent of people in South-West Zone objected this; and

(d) the expenditure incurred so far in adding one additional berth in between the two berths in the second class sleeper?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) In order to enhance the passenger carrying capacity, additional longitudinal middle berths were thought to be provided in sleeper class coaches. Up to 31.01.2009, about 5190 sleeper class coaches have been provided with such berths.

There have been some passenger complaints about inconvenience and discomfort caused by increased congestion and inadequate space in such coaches. It has now been decided to discontinue the scheme.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(e) During the survey conducted on South Western Railway, 91% of the people objected to the introduction of additional side berths in coaches.

(d) The work of provision of longitudinal middle berths has been carried out in various Zonal Railways through the process of tendering. A concrete assessment of the expenditure incurred is not available at this juncture. However, the average cost of the work is about Rs. 1.3 lakhs per sleeper class coach.

Electrification of Delhi-Jaipur-Ahmedabad rail line

667. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when the electrification work of Delhi-Jaipur-Ahmedabad region is likely to be started;

(b) if there is no such proposal, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government proposes to initiate plans for early electrification of said route and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The choice for electrification of section is based on consideration of economic viability and operational flexibility. Electrification of Delhi-Jaipur-Ahmedabad rail line does not offer such scope at present.

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.